



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PROTOCOL DIVISION

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**REPORT OF THE 53<sup>RD</sup> SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM PLENARY ASSEMBLY**

**Arusha, The United Republic of Tanzania**

**2 – 8 July 2023**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The permanent delegation to SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) attended the 53<sup>rd</sup> SADC PF Plenary Assembly held in Arusha, Tanzania, from 2 to 8 July 2023. The Plenary Assembly met under the theme “Modernising Agriculture to address Food Security and Youth Unemployment in the SADC Region: The role of parliaments”. The Plenary Assembly, through a Symposium, reflected on the theme and considered the respective reports emanating from its Standing Committee Session and Executive Committee meetings held in May 2023. The Plenary Assembly, through a motion by South Africa, also engaged on the matter concerning the upcoming elections of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Participating at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Assembly supported Parliament’s constitutional mandates and objectives as follows:

- **Law-making and Oversight:** The Plenary Assembly’s consideration and adoption of the resolutions of Standing Committees and the Symposium presented South African delegates with the opportunity to contribute to the debates on key policy issues of regional concern, as well as share South Africa’s experiences, where relevant. The final adopted resolutions will strengthen the law-making and oversight role of relevant South African parliamentary committees as they consider these policy recommendations that are informed by regional perspectives.
- **Deepening international engagement:** The South African delegation contributed to deepening Parliament’s international engagement and promoting South Africa’s foreign policy position of unifying SADC and Africa through leading in efforts for SADC to unify behind one candidate for the position of IPU President for the period 2023 – 2026. This position, through a motion by South Africa that supports Hon. Dr Tulia Ackson’s candidature as the SADC candidate, was adopted as a Plenary Assembly resolution.

The outcomes of the meeting require the following pertinent issues for noting/action by Parliament:

- **The election of the President of the IPU:** Urgent follow-up with the campaign group established to support Hon. Dr Ackson’s candidature for the IPU President position is needed. The Office of the Speaker, Office of the Secretary to Parliament and the Office of the Division Manager: International Relations and Protocol are therefore advised to urgently follow-up with the campaign group to finalise details of the campaign.
- The Parliamentary Group on International Relations (PGIR) **tabling and referring the 53<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Assembly’s resolutions with the relevant committees of Parliament for noting and/or action** (*Ctrl + Click on each motion to follow link to full resolution*):

<b>Resolution by 53<sup>rd</sup> SADC PF</b>	<b>Committee(s) to be referred to</b>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Committee on Finance</li> <li>• Standing Committee on Appropriations</li> <li>• Select Committee on Finance</li> <li>• Select Committee on Appropriations</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Mineral Resources and Energy</li> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition</li> </ul>

<i>Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights (DGHR)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select Committee on Land Reform, Environment, Mineral Resources and Energy</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development (GEWAYD)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment</li> <li>• Select Committee on Land Reform, Environment, Mineral Resources and Energy</li> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities</li> <li>• Select Committee on Health and Social Services</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Health</li> <li>• Select Committee on Health and Social Services</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Multi-Party Women's Caucus</li> </ul>
<i>Consideration of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment, Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programs and Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition</li> <li>• Standing Committee on Finance</li> <li>• Standing Committee on Appropriations</li> <li>• Select Committee on Finance</li> <li>• Select Committee on Appropriations</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs</li> </ul>
<i>Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Joint meeting of the Standing Committees and RWPC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Multi-Party Women's Caucus</li> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities</li> <li>• Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services</li> <li>• Select Committee on Security and Justice</li> </ul>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the meeting: To deliberate on the theme “Modernising Agriculture to address Food Security and Youth Unemployment in the SADC Region: The role of parliaments” and consider and adopt reports of the Executive Committee, Standing Committees, Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee (RPMLOC), and Regional Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC).

Delegation Members:

- Hon. Speaker Ms N. Mapisa-Nqakula, Leader of the Delegation (2022 – 2024 Executive Committee (EXCO) substantive member)
- Hon. S. Mohai, MP – (Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources (FANR))
- Hon. N. Bilankulu, MP (Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development (GEWAYD) and Regional Womens Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC))
- Hon. D. Moela, MP (Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP))
- Hon. D. Bergman, MP (Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights (DGHR))
- Hon. V. Mente, MP (Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) and RWPC) (attended remotely)

Delegation Secretariat:

- Mr X. George: Secretary to Parliament
- Mr D. Sithole: Division Manager – International Relations and Protocol Division (IPRD)
- Ms N. Nojozi: Parliamentary and political advisor to the Speaker of the NA
- Mr Z. Mvulane: Head – Office of the Chief Whip: NCOP (National Council of Provinces)
- Ms Z. Mahabeni: Senior Executive Assistant to the Speaker of the NA
- Ms L. Ntshinga: Executive Assistant – Secretary to Parliament
- Mr I. Mundell: Protocol Officer – IRPD
- Dr N. Leibrandt-Loxton: Researcher – IRPD
- Ms M. Monnagotla – Researcher – IRPD
- Ms Khuthala Noah - Media Relations Manager
- Mr Jabulani Majozi – Parliamentary Communication Officer

## 2. MEETING OUTCOMES

### 2.1 Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony of the 53<sup>rd</sup> SADC PF Plenary Assembly was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2023 and the opening remarks were delivered by high-level speakers including Tanzanian President, Ms. Samia Suluhu Hassan, Tanzanian Speaker of the National Assembly Dr. Tulia Ackson and the SADC PF Secretary General, Ms. Boemo Sekgoma.

President Samia noted that with appropriate interventions, zero hunger come 2030 is possible in the SADC region. She emphasised the importance of legislators in their oversight role, including the enactment of essential laws, policies, and the ratification of regional and global protocols that promote agricultural development. She also reminded Member States of the need to invest in the youth to ensure a food secure region. Furthermore, she underscored the importance of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), blue economy and

conservation agriculture with a view to building resilience and making the regional economic bloc food secure.

## **2.2 Symposium on the theme ‘Modernising Agriculture to address Food Security and Youth Unemployment in the SADC Region: The role of parliaments’**

The symposium on the theme ‘Modernising Agriculture to address the Food Security and Youth Unemployment in the SADC Region: The role of parliaments’ was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023. Tanzanian Minister of Agriculture, Mr Hussein Bashe addressed the Symposium and highlighted that Africa’s food demand continues to outstrip domestic supply by about 20% with an average import bill of US\$ 80 billion growing at 6% annually. This, despite the Continent having 65% of the world’s remaining uncultivated arable land with the potential to produce enough food to feed itself and contribute to feeding 9.7 billion by 2050. He also highlighted that intra and inter Africa trade agreements such as the African Continental Free Trade Area provide an expanded market for produce while also making raw materials for agro-industries such as minerals for fertilisers, food for humans and animals more accessible. He encouraged MPs to continue to advocate for the harmonisation, ratification, domestication and implementation of SADC agriculture protocols/treaties and other decisions to improve food independence and security. He also called for sustained public-private partnerships to attract more investment into the agriculture sector and proper planning to allocate resources for sustained growth by linking the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors.

Speakers and leaders of delegation were afforded the opportunity to present interventions and/or country reports on the theme. Hon. Bilankulu presented an intervention on behalf of South Africa. Hon. Bilankula noted that MPs must question the national ministries of agriculture on their respective countries’ implementation of the Malabo Declaration and the related SADC initiatives through oversight work. This will provide insight into the countries’ progress on these initiatives, including whether they are adequately funding these efforts. She also called for investment in the capacities of youth to become drivers of improvement in agriculture and food systems. Providing appropriate training, education, mentorship opportunities and access to modern technologies will enable young people to break through employment barriers and play a crucial role in the development of our agricultural sector.

## **2.3 Plenary Assembly**

### **2.3.1 Presentation of Country Reports on Implementation of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Assembly Resolutions**

The Leaders of Delegations presented their respective country reports to the 53<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Assembly on 4 July 2023. South Africa’s country report was presented by Hon. Speaker Mapisa-Nqakula and highlighted the following as actioned by the South African Parliament:

- To maintain balance between the executive and legislative branches of government to ensure that the South African Defence Force (SANDF) is being used in a suitable manner, that the National Assembly Speaker and the National Council of Provinces Chairperson noted President Cyril Ramaphosa’s letter dated 6 April 2023 informing them that he has extended the employment of 1 495 members of the South African National Defence Force in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 16 April 2023 until 15 April 2024 in fulfilment of South Africa’s commitment to maintain peace and security in SADC;
- Concerning the SADC PF’s transformation into a SADC regional parliament, that President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the SADC Agreement Amending the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community (to recognise the SADC Parliament as a SADC institution) on the

margins of the Extra-Ordinary Organ Troika Summit of Heads and State and Government that was held on Tuesday, 31 January 2023 in Windhoek, Namibia;

- In line with the Regional Womens' Parliamentary Caucus's (RWPC) resolution concerning the domestication of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the South African NA approved the Agreement which, among others, requires State Parties to enact and adopt appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures to ensure that women and men enjoy equal rights in marriage and are regarded as equal partners. Moreover, Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is conducting public hearings on The National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill (henceforth, the Council) that seeks to establish an independent Council, to facilitate a multi-sectoral approach for the prevention and elimination of, and response to gender-based violence and femicide.
- In line with the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee's resolution at the previous plenary assembly, government announced new policy measures as part of the 2023 draft Taxation Laws Amendment Bill to increase the share of renewable energy in the country's energy mix and reduce the pressure on the grid.

Following the deliberations on all the country reports, they were adopted.

### **2.3.2 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Executive Committee on Policy and Administrative Matters**

The Report was moved by Hon. Speaker Mapisa-Nqakula and proposed the following substantive matters for the Plenary Assembly's consideration:

- **Transformation of the SADC PF into a regional parliament:** The Plenary Assembly was requested to approve that: (a) the Forum continues working with the SADC Secretariat to reflect the Forum's functions as earmarked in the approved Roadmap to the transformation proposal; and (b) that further lobbies be conducted by the Forum with Heads of States and Government, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and other relevant stakeholders to ensure progress in the signature of the Amendment to the SADC Treaty.
- **Update on the SADC PF and its Successors Trust:** The Plenary Assembly was requested to approve that: (a) the Trust be allowed to work independently in accordance with the trust law prevailing in Namibia and to resource mobilise on behalf of the Forum as beneficiary; (b) that the appointed Trustees, are to henceforth conduct the proceedings of the Trust pursuant to their powers and functions under the registered Trust Deed.
- **Domestication strategies by the Forum:** The Plenary Assembly was requested to approve the continued strategy of the Forum to collaborate with Parliaments and relevant stakeholders and pursue domestication of legal norms through targeted projects and initiatives that aim to enhance the socio-economic landscape in SADC in line with the Forum's Strategic Plan.
- **Resource mobilisation:** The Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that resource mobilisation initiatives continue to be explored with the US cooperating partners, the Indian Embassy and other partners which share similar objectives as the Forum in development cooperation.
- **Hosting of the Southern Africa Regional Hub (SAHUB):** The Plenary Assembly was requested to approve that the SAHUB be hosted at the Forum and that resource mobilisation be undertaken to fund the hosting so that same does not affect the Forum's core budget.
- **Update on the Risk Management Framework:** The Plenary Assembly was requested to note the above and to approve that the Risk Management Framework of the Forum be continuously monitored with rigour so that the Forum does not meet with any operational or strategic impediments in the medium to long term.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### 2.3.3 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Executive Committee on Financial Matters (Treasurer's Report)

The Treasurer's Report presented the following to the Plenary Assembly for consideration:

- The Plenary Assembly was requested to consider and take note of the status of Annual Mandatory Contributions as at 31st March 2023, and the update as at 15th June 2023, and to appreciate the commitment of Member Parliaments in ensuring that contributions were paid.
- The Plenary Assembly was requested to consider and take note of the performance of the budget as at 31st March 2023, as well as to appreciate the reasons for the unfavourable variances and the fact that the total budget was not exceeded. The EXCO further suggested that the over-expenditure on certain budget lines was caused by the need to ensure that activities were undertaken to advance the objectives of the Forum in line with its Strategic Plan, while also strengthening reliance on internal resources.
- The Plenary Assembly was requested to take note of the contributions from donors and cooperating partners, and to express its appreciation to the various donors and cooperating partners for their continued commitment and support.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### 2.3.4 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI)

The Report captured the outcomes of the Standing Committee's meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "Debt Ceiling in SADC Member States". The Committee engaged on the need for parliamentarians to monitor their countries' debt acquisition and ensure it is kept at manageable levels, especially considering the SADC Region approaching the 60% debt to GDP ratio. The importance of having laws, regulations and policies that clearly specify provisions that will ensure sustainable levels of external public debt was highlighted. Following its deliberations, the Committee recommended to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** Member states to strengthen their public debt management by establishing independent Public Debt Management Offices; ensuring cooperation with Government agencies; publishing yearly reports on compliance; and, making use of reports by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and think tanks.
- **Implore** the Executive to constantly report on adherence to the debt-to-GDP limit so as to ensure debt sustainability; and enhance transparency and allocative efficiency of limited resources in the wake of constrained borrowing.
- **Advise** Member states should support the requirement to move towards the convergence limit by; a) setting up robust organizational structures including but not limited to the establishment of Economic Development Ministry or Agency; b) Strengthening compliance or audit within the bureaucracy; and, c) Provision of clear operational guidance on debt accumulation.
- **Encourage** the adoption of uniformity in the legal framework relating to public financial management as part of efforts to maintain macro-economic stability. Adherence to debt limits, therefore, should become an indicator of fiscal discipline which is an important element in achieving regional financial stability.
- **Call** on SADC Parliaments to closely watch exceptions and safeguards in their legislation, for example the escape clause which, in some cases, results in large deviations from existing rules, making it difficult to quickly return to the existing rules. Such clauses were commonly resorted to during the COVID 19 era.

- **Draw attention** to the need to proactively advocate for Budget-making Legislatures which have the capacity to amend or reject the budget proposals of the Executive so as to give Parliament the real power of the purse.
- **Advise** SADC Parliaments to insist on being better structured to reflect the status and the role of Parliament as an institution that exercises oversight over Government actions so that Parliament can be an active player, not a by-stander in the governance matrix.
- **Urge** Member States to research thoroughly on countries that have kept the debt to GDP ratio at sustainably low levels such as Denmark to ensure that they benchmark on best practices.
- **Implore** SADC member States, most of which are resource rich, to leverage on their natural resources to support public expenditure rather than resort to borrowing. Examples can be drawn from countries in the region such as Botswana, which has leveraged on its diamonds to support its economic development.
- **Encourage** SADC Parliaments to advocate for strengthened transparency and accountability models to ensure that the “national cake” is not overburdened by imprudent decisions, including unsustainable borrowing. This calls for careful scrutiny of public expenditure to ensure prudent use of resources, including an open declaration of debt accumulation.
- **Implore** SADC Parliaments to heighten their advocacy efforts for the incorporation of the provisions on capping debt-servicing costs through, *inter alia*, domesticating the Model Law on Public Financial Management. In this regard, advise SADC Member States to learn from Namibia which capped the debt servicing costs to 10% of revenue.
- **Call** on Member states to ensure that the Model Law on Public Financial Management makes provisions on seeking Parliamentary approval in the event of a windfall, unexpected or unplanned revenue such as Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).
- **Encourage** SADC Parliaments to scrutinise agreements on the exploration of mineral resources to ensure that stringent clauses are incorporated in the agreements in order to maximise benefits to the host countries from the region’s manifold resources such as lithium and oil.
- **Implore** Parliaments to strengthen their oversight role on public debt management by scrutinising borrowing to avoid loans meant for consumptive purposes including, opaque bank loans which tend to feed into corruption and corruptive tendencies.
- **Urge** Parliaments to keep watch on potential breach of loan agreements within the dominion of international law, especially in case of changes in Executive management, where new incumbents unilaterally refuse to be held accountable to previous Governments’ commitments.
- **Emphasize** that SADC Parliaments must continue to monitor debt accumulation by imploring various tools such as the public debt-to-GDP ratio, interest payments to revenue ratio among others as indicators of macroeconomic convergence, taking into account the sustainability of the debt.
- **Called upon** SADC Parliamentarians to monitor other related costs to debts incurred (the hidden costs).

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### **2.3.5 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR)**

The Report captured the outcomes of the Standing Committee’s meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme “The situation of hunger and food insecurity in the SADC region, Challenges fuelling food insecurity, Major international goals and African Agenda, investments and performance of Malabo commitments, Environment that can attract the Youths to invest in agriculture.” The Report contained the following recommendations from the Committee emanating from (a) its Working Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and (b) its deliberations on the said theme of its meeting:



- *Working Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela:*
  - **Call** upon SADC Member States to institute deliberate measures (such as Joint Commissions) to engage with Venezuela in the political, social and economic spheres.
  - **Implore** SADC member States to cultivate closer collaboration with Venezuela, especially in the mining and oil sectors in order for SADC Member States to benefit from that country's immense experience and expertise.
  - **Encourage** SADC Member States to take advantage of the opportunity to expose their various technocrats to the planning processes for successful economic diversification in Venezuela.
  - **Further implore** SADC Member States explore and take advantage of the possibility of exposing young SADC citizens to technical training in Venezuela through various technical and vocational programmes.
  - **Urge** SADC national Parliaments to establish friendship associations to facilitate interaction among the Parliamentarians of the SADC region and those of Venezuela.
  
- *Deliberations on the theme of its meeting:*
  - **Call** on SADC Members of Parliaments to demonstrate willingness to deal with food insecurity and hunger issues by making progress towards allocation of 10% of their discretionary budget to the agriculture sector in order to fulfill the Malabo commitments.
  - **Encourage** Member States to ensure that SADC citizens, especially those in rural areas, access and use clean energy such as gas and solar, and to eliminate the use of unsustainable sources of energy such as charcoal and firewood which indiscriminately destroys forests which constitute a safe source of food.
  - **Prompt** Member States to prioritise the use of clean energy given that sources such as charcoal and firewood often promote gender discrimination through collection and distribution streams.
  - **Urge** Member states to seek cheaper alternative sources of fertilizers which can be affordable to small scale farmers.
  - **Encourage** SADC Member states to speed up the establishment of the SADC Parliament with clear Model Law-making functions.
  - **Urge** SADC Parliaments to develop National and Regional Joint Agriculture Review (JASR) Platforms.
  - **Urge** SADC Member States to leverage on and actualise the potential job creation from the agriculture sector by investing in the sector as it is critical to supporting economic growth and reducing poverty and food insecurity.
  - **Call** on SADC Member States to adopt a gender based right to food and nutrition framework in all future reviews of policies and strategies.
  - **Further call** on SADC Member States to ensure that the GDP generated from the agriculture sector is utilized innovatively to reduce the debt ceiling and the overall Government borrowing.

Hon. Mohai, in supporting the adoption of the report, emphasised the need for SADC countries to adopt agro-processing to towards producing foods that last longer, waste less, and are more nutritious. Agro-processing also holds opportunities to create jobs for our people, especially the youth, and boosts the region's respective economies. To support agro-processing, he also highlighted the need for good policies and investments in infrastructure, finance, technology, skills, and regulations.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### 2.3.6 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights (DGHR)

The Report captured the outcomes of the Standing Committee's meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "Towards a Rights-Based Approach to the Conduct of Business Within the Natural Resources Sector in the SADC Region: What Parliamentarians Can Do?". Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Reaffirm** the centrality of Parliamentarians in advancing the concept of business and human rights in the extractive sector in Southern Africa to ensure that TNCs complied with human rights and environmental laws and that remedies were available and accessible to citizens and communities in case of violations;
- **Urge** SADC Parliamentarians to raise awareness among stakeholders in their respective countries, including the among relevant government ministries, regarding the UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights and encourage robust participation in the process to ensure that the final outcome would be inclusive, covering all human rights in order to curb corporate impunity of TNCs;
- **Urge SADC** Parliamentarians to prioritise the strengthening of the oversight function of Parliament by supporting the process for the adoption of the binding treaty as this would enhance accountability by the government in discharging its regulatory role and establish effective measures to protect States from corporate capture;
- **Call** on SADC Parliaments to strengthen the representative role of SADC legislators by amplifying their voice in the ongoing processes towards the adoption of the binding treaty on business and human rights, leveraging collaboration with partners including civil society organisations;
- **Encourage** SADC PF Secretariat to, in line with the already entrenched Model Law making approach, explore the feasibility of developing model textual provisions for the binding treaty which serves as a benchmark for negotiations and subsequent domestication at national level;
- **Call** on SADC national Parliaments to curb corporate impunity through strong legislation at the national level;
- **Urge SADC** Parliamentarians to support the African Commission on Human and People's Rights' resolution on Business and Human Rights in Africa and advocate for its speedy implementation to ensure accountability and access to remedy for business-related human rights violations in Africa, particularly for the marginalised and vulnerable populations.
- **Urge** SADC Parliaments to leverage their mandate to advocate for the alignment of regional natural resources governance frameworks with the Business and Human Rights Concept and for the development of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights;
- **Urge** the SADC PF Secretariat to prioritise the training of MPs in business and human rights through collaboration with partners in order to buttress evidence-based approaches in promoting the respect of human rights in the conduct of business within the natural resources sector in the SADC region; and
- **Call** for sustained collaboration between SADC PF and the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA), the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) Wits University, the African Coalition for Corporate Accountability (ACCA), and the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) to ensure that the training of MPs in Business and Human Rights was undertaken.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### 2.3.7 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development (GEWAYD)

The Report captured the outcomes of the Standing Committee's meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "The role of parliamentarians in promoting gender and climate justice agenda in the SADC region". Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** SADC Member States to pass legislation that promotes the use of clean energy in order to mitigate climate change.
- **Appeal** to SADC Member states to consider climate change as a business opportunity. In this regard, **implore** SADC parliamentarians to endeavour to persuade their governments to invest in youth innovation in mitigation and adaptive measures such as production of solar panels, water harvesting equipment and energy conservation appliances, among others.
- **Call** on Member states to have climate change solutions that address challenges and threats to women's livelihoods, health, and safety.
- **Urge** SADC National Parliaments to take pragmatic actions in the form of voting for budgets which enhance funding towards climate change mitigation actions.
- **Resolve** to take measures to capacitate SADC parliamentarians to advocate for the full operationalisation and resourcing of the loss and damage facility so that countries within the region that suffer from the effects of climate change do not suffer and increased debt burden in their quest to reconstruct infrastructure damaged by these extreme weather events.
- **Strongly urge** parliamentarians in the SADC Region to advocate for concessional or grant financing for climate change rather than embracing commercial loans.
- **Call** on SADC Member States to integrate climate change solutions into programmes that are aimed at addressing barriers to gender equality.
- **Urge** Member states to enhance gender-sensitive investments in adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and capacity building initiatives.
- **Resolve** that the SADC Parliamentary Forum, in collaboration with its Member Parliaments, facilitates parliamentary institutional capacity building programmes so as to enable SADC Parliaments to provide a strong mechanism for ongoing parliamentary scrutiny, especially as it relates to women and climate change programmes.
- **Urge** Parliamentarians in the SADC Region to leverage on their representative role and provide a knowledge link with women constituents as a vital facet of their countries' gender sensitive response and resilience to climate change.
- **Reiterate** the need for SADC parliamentarians to take all necessary measures to promote the voice of women in the climate change discourse and for the inclusion of women's priorities and needs such as water, food security, agriculture, energy, health, disaster management, and conflict, ought to be reflected in the development planning and funding processes for climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience.
- **Call** upon SADC parliamentarians to advocate for improvement in early warning systems for various extreme weather events.
- As a best practice, **encourage** National Parliaments to set up caucuses or clubs that will sustain climate change discourse in the parliamentary fora.

### 2.3.8 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP)

The Report captured the outcomes of the Standing Committee's meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "Strengthening Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in the Context of Climate Change and Emergency Situations". Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** SADC Member States to purposely and continuously pursue the respect, protection and promotion of all fundamental human rights irrespective of the state of the physical, geographical and socioeconomic environment. This must include the respect, protection and promotion of SRH in Emergency situations.
- **Call upon** Parliamentarians in SADC Member States to advocate for the ratification, domestication and/or adoption of the various international, continental and regional frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2016-2030), the SADC Disaster Risk Reduction Strategic Plan (2018-2030) and the SADC Gender Responsive Disaster Risk Reduction Strategic Plan and Action Plan (2020-2030).
- **Implore** Parliamentarians in SADC Member States to progressively review and reform their domestic legislative and institutional frameworks to incorporate the evident and inextricable interlinkages between SRH, climate change and disaster management with a particular and deliberate focus on the promotion and protection of SRH in Emergencies.
- **Encourage** Parliamentarians to urge SADC Member States to strengthen inter-country coordination by adopting the good practices outlined in the SADC Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.
- **Implore** Parliamentarians to encourage SADC Member States to adopt a bottom-up approach to disaster management with a particular focus on young women, girls, traditional and religious leaders.
- **Urge** SADC parliamentarians to step up advocacy for Member States to allocate adequate financial resources required to strengthen disaster response while, in the same vein ensuring that there are adequate SRH commodities. This must include financial support for the provision of the Minimum Initial Service Packages for SRH in Emergencies and the establishment of one-stop centres for provision of SRH kits during emergencies.
- **Call upon** SADC Member States, in conjunction with the higher and tertiary education sector and relevant partner organisations to develop disaggregated data collection tools necessary to conduct community-based vulnerability assessments.
- **Draw the attention** of SADC Member States to the reality of the growing interlinkages between SRH, Climate Change and disaster risk reduction which have disproportionately affected women and girls.
- **Urge** SADC PF to develop guidelines or minimum norms for the promotion and protection of SRH in Emergencies.

Hon. Moela, in supporting the report, called for SADC countries to effectively integrate SRHR into climate change mitigation strategies. SRHR must be included in national policies and strategies related to climate change, such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). He also observed that it is crucial to recognize the role of family planning and reproductive health services in mitigating the impacts of climate change. By improving consistency and complementarity between national climate legislation and other societal goals, such as poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction, energy access, gender equality, and ecosystem protection, the region can ensure a comprehensive approach to addressing these interconnected issues.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### **2.3.9 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Regional Women’s Parliamentary Caucus**

The Report captured the outcomes of the RWPC’s meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme “Leveraging the Social Media to Advance Women Political Participation in the

SADC Region”. Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** SADC Member Parliaments to lobby their governments to grant tax rebates or subsidies in importation of digital gadgets to ease access of these devices by women and youth;
- **Prompt** SADC Member Parliaments to streamline parliamentary programmes to allow for ICT inclusiveness and an enhanced engagement by women MPs, especially on fast-evolving issues such as social media;
- **Reaffirm** its commitment to close the digital gender divide existing in Southern Africa by enabling programmes at SADC-PF level which aim to sensitise MPs, especially women MPs, to be ICT literate and to promote participatory democracy by engaging citizens through online means;
- **Encourage** SADC Member Parliaments to diligently perform their oversight role in the quest to ensure that their governments provide reliable electrical energy and internet connectivity infrastructure, especially in the rural areas, in order to bring social media digital platforms closer to the rural populations.
- **Call upon** SADC Member Parliaments to encourage their governments to lobby the mobile service providers to ensure that the airtime and data tariffs are affordable to the generality of the citizens.
- **Urge** SADC Parliaments to enact necessary cybersecurity legislation to protect users from falling victim of online fraud and online gender-based violence, especially women and girls who may be less technologically savvy due to the digital gender divide.
- **Urge** SADC PF to strengthen its response mechanism to gender based violence, including online violence, in each Member State holding elections in 2023 and 2024 and beyond, through the Forum’s Election Observation Missions. This should be substantiated by documentation of both physical and online gender-based violence.
- **Call upon** SADC Member States to promote ICT literacy and education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels without discrimination to both male and female individuals in order to provide them with equal opportunities in life whilst leveraging on ICT resources;
- **Direct** the SADC PF Secretariat to organise further training, especially on managing social media content.

In seconding this report, Hon. Bilankulu observed the limitations and risks that have been highlighted in relation to the use of social media, including the online abuse and harassment of women, notably those women who wish to participate or who are already in the political space. She underscored the importance of legislation and policies that are protective of women against all forms of online gender-based violence in the SADC region that can create a safe space for women’s political participation and increase their representation in Parliaments and other public offices.

#### **2.3.10 Consideration of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment, Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programs and Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights**

The Report captured the outcomes of the Joint Meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme “Parliaments’ role in legislating for strategic and sensitive assets taking into account the security of the nation, while encouraging direct investments”. Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** SADC Member Parliaments to review the normative framework for the use of strategic assets of the nation, and to dissociate those from foreign ownership;
- **Prompt** SADC Member States to find healthy and innovative ways of attracting FDI, and to depart from the sale of assets, especially land to foreigners as a means to improve the yearly FDI figure given that such forms of FDI would be one-off only and would not be renewable to the economy;
- **Urge** SADC Member States to leverage on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to promote intra-Africa investments which are sustainable and which generate wealth that can be absorbed within Africa;
- **Encourage** SADC Member States to submit major debt instruments that are likely to bind successive Governments to Parliament for its approval by a qualified majority, in view of improving good governance, transparency and accountability in the management of public funds, especially where such funds will be utilized to acquire or construct strategic or sensitive assets;
- **Further encourage** SADC Member States to constitute such oversight bodies or agencies as are permissible by law to monitor the contracting of foreign debt by all public bodies or departments and to ensure that hidden debt or guarantees are not concealed through complex organizational structures.
- **Call upon** SADC Member Parliaments to domesticate the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management (PFM) adopted by the 51st Plenary Assembly of the Forum to heighten parliamentary control over the public financial processes, including government debt operations;
- **Urge** SADC Member Parliaments to enact laws that provide for transparency with regards to foreign debt instruments, and a renegotiation of terms of foreign debt where these disclose stringent foreclosure procedures on strategic assets of the State; and
- **Call upon** the Forum, through its Plenary Assembly, to adopt a Model Law on the Management of Strategic and Sensitive Assets of the State, which will also encompass issues relating to the linkages of such assets with debt obligations and the need to preserve clean FDI for sustainable economic growth.

Hon. Mohai supported the adoption of the Report, stating that South Africa fully supports the drafting and adoption of the Model Law on the Management of Strategic and Sensitive Assets of the State. He observed that regional collaboration to establish a common framework will ensure clear guidelines for transparency and good governance when it comes to foreign funding of state assets. He concluded by stating that through such collective efforts, such a model law can strengthen regional cooperation, build trust, and share best practices in promoting responsible utilization of external resources while protecting SADC countries' interests.

Following deliberation, the Report was adopted.

### **2.3.11 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee**

The Report captured the outcomes of the Committee's meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "Progress on the domestication of the SADC Model Law on Elections: Using Electoral System Design to achieve inclusive governance, specifically women, youth and minority groups participation and representation as well as political financing regulation". Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Urge** SADC Member States to ensure regular reforms of the electoral systems guided by the seven main pillars of electoral reforms, in particular inclusion of marginalized groups and electoral integrity.
- **Implore** SADC Parliaments to advocate for the development and enactment of legislation ensuring that reforms of the electoral system are premised on broad-based representation of all segments of society, including vulnerable and marginalized social groups through stakeholder consultations, genuine national dialogue and consensus.
- **Encourage** SADC Member States to explore ways in which young people and the youth can be motivated to participate in elections in order to address youth voter apathy and declining trust in institutions including political parties.
- **Authorize and direct** the Secretariat to proceed to engage with international and regional parliamentary bodies for a platform to present reports on the Forum's activities and programmes and on the domestication and implementation of the SADC PF Model Laws as a measure to give the Forum prominence and to ensure that its value is appreciated by the member countries which constitute those bodies.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### **2.3.12 Motion for the Adoption of the Report of the Joint meeting of the Standing Committees and RWPC**

The Report captured the outcomes of the Joint meeting held for the 53rd Plenary Assembly under the theme "Accelerating the domestication and implementation of SADC Model Laws on Child Marriage and Gender-based Violence". Following deliberations, the Committee resolved to recommend to the Plenary Assembly to:

- **Encourage** SADC Parliamentarians, Parliaments and Standing Committees to build consensus and commitment on the need to fight all forms of GBV and eradicating Child Marriage through domestication and implementation of the SADC Model Laws;
- **Urge** SADC Member States to review domestic legislation to align with the SADC Model Law on Child Marriage, particularly to set the minimum age of marriage at 18 years without exception;
- **Further urge** SADC Member States to ensure compliance with regional and international human rights standards by following a human rights approach to Child Marriage and GBV by reviewing laws on Child Marriage and GBV to ensure compliance with these regional and international human rights standards, on which the two SADC Model Laws are based.
- **Encourage** SADC Governments to adopt a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to child marriage, sexual and reproductive health rights and GBV in view of the crucial and complimentary role of different stakeholders which constitute of both state and non-state actors;
- **Encourage** SADC Member States to prioritise school re-entry for pregnant and married girls; repeal existing discriminatory laws and policies which ban, prevent or discourage married and pregnant girls from attending schools and integrate comprehensive sex education in the education curriculum.
- **Encourage** SADC Governments to recognise the link between the Sustainable Development Goals and the prevalence of GBV and Child Marriage in the region, which entails that at current rates of progress, developmental targets set in the SADC Vision 2050, the AU Agenda 2063 and UN Agenda 2030 will not be reached, and that it is necessary to address the nexus between poverty and vulnerability to rights violations, including Child Marriage and GBV.
- **Call upon** SADC Governments to ensure adequate budget allocations and to promote innovative financing means to achieve sexual and reproductive health rights and eliminate Child Marriage and GBV.

- **Urge** SADC Parliaments and parliamentarians to deliberately monitor and evaluate progress on domestication by exercising oversight over the relevant Government bodies and departments which administer GBV and Child Marriage issues.
- **Urge** SADC Member States to develop and implement strategies for awareness and disseminate messages on the prevention of GBV and Child Marriage, bearing in mind the need to develop advocacy materials which are adapted to local languages for better assimilation.
- **Implore** SADC Member States to unite and achieve the shared goal of addressing GBV and Child Marriage through accelerating the full domestication and implementation of the SADC Model Laws on Child Marriage and Gender-Based Violence.

Following deliberations, the Report was adopted.

### 2.3.13 Members' motions

- *Motion on a Matter of Urgency and Regional Importance: Motion for SADC PF to Support the Candidature of Hon. Dr Tulia Ackson, Speaker of the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania for the position of IPU President*

The motion was moved by Hon. Bergman and seconded by Hon. Pedro Sebastiao from Angola. The motion called for the Plenary Assembly to:

- agree to the candidature of Ms Tulia Ackson as the SADC PF preferred candidate for the Inter-Parliamentary Union President;
- establish a six-person campaign group, reflective of the diversity of the membership of the Forum, to lead and campaign other bodies and geopolitical groups in support of Ms Ackson's candidacy for the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union;
- and that costs of the campaign be covered by the SADC PF member parliaments.

The countries that have indicated their interest to be part of the campaign group are Angola, Tanzania, DRC, South Africa and Zambia. The motion was agreed to.

## 3. RECOMMENDED ISSUES FOR NOTING AND/OR ACTION BY PARLIAMENT

Parliament is advised to note and/or action the following:

- **The election of the President of the IPU:** Urgent follow-up with the campaign group established to support Hon. Dr Ackson's candidature for the IPU President position is needed. The Office of the Speaker, Office of the Secretary to Parliament and the Office of the Division Manager: International Relations and Protocol are therefore advised to urgently follow-up with the campaign group to finalise details of the campaign.
- The Parliamentary Group on International Relations (PGIR) **tabling and referring the 53<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Assembly's resolutions with the relevant committees of Parliament for noting and/or action (as per summary on pages 2 and 3).**

ENDS